

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

A REPORT

FROM THE

SECRETARY OF WAR,

IN

Relation to the manner the Troops in the service of the United States, now operating against the Seminole tribe of Indians, have been subsisted, whether by contract or otherwise, and whether they have been regularly furnished with rations.

JANUARY 30, 1818.

Printed by order of the Senate of the United States.

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1818.

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The Secretary of War has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the report of the Secretary of the War Department, dated the 1st day of January, 1900, and to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

Very respectfully,
J. M. McKim

PRINTED BY J. M. McKim

1900

To the Senate of the United States:

In compliance with a resolution of the Senate, of the 22d of this month, requesting to be informed "in what manner the troops in the service of the United States, now operating against the Seminole tribe of Indians, have been subsisted, whether by contract, or otherwise, and whether they have been furnished regularly with rations," I now transmit a report from the Secretary of War containing the information required.

JAMES MONROE.

Washington, January 28, 1818.

The Secretary of War, to whom was referred the resolution of the Senate, requesting the President of the United States "to inform the Senate, in what manner the troops in the service of the United States, now operating against the Seminole Indians, have been subsisted, whether by contract, or otherwise, and whether they have been furnished regularly with rations," has the honor to

REPORT:

That the troops of the United States are regularly subsisted by contract. The contract stipulates "That the commanding general, or person appointed by him, at each post or place, in case of absolute failure, or deficiency, in the quantity of provisions contracted to be delivered and issued, shall have power to supply the deficiency, by purchase, at the risk, and on account of the contractor" That portion of the forces, which is now operating against the Seminole Indians, is within the district contracted for, by Benjamin G. Orr, Esq. His contract commenced the 1st of June last. The Department of War, anticipating an increased demand for rations in that quarter, made early and liberal advances of money to Mr. Orr, to enable him to give prompt obedience to the requisitions of the commanding general. Requisitions were made for deposits, in advance, under the terms of the contract, at the several posts on the frontier of Georgia, and in the adjacent territories. By the last official reports, these requisitions were not complied with, and the commandant had detailed officers to supply the deficiency, by purchase.

The accompanying correspondence will show the extent of the real failure, and the evils apprehended from an anticipated one; and embraces all the information possessed by this department on the subject.

It is proper to remark, that the contractor reports, that he has ordered an ample supply of rations to Fort Scott, from New Orleans, and that they were shipped on the 5th ultimo. This supply is intended to be conveyed up the Apalachicola river, and, it is believed, they may have arrived at their destination before this period, in which event, the purchases ordered by the general, will cease.

All which is respectfully submitted.

J. C. CALHOUN.

Department of War, 28th January, 1818.

The President of the United States.

Extract of a letter from general Gaines, to the Secretary of War, dated Camp Montgomery, June 4, 1817.

The late contractors having failed to make a deposit pursuant to my requisition of the 24th April, [No. 1 and 2] the provisions in the

contractor's store being reduced below the requisite supply for the present week, ending the 7th instant, and the new contractor not having made his appearance, or notified me of any provision made by him for supplying the troops of my command, I have ordered a supply to be purchased for this month, and have directed major Nicks, the officer making the purchase, to draw upon the Department of War for the amount.

Extract of a letter from general Gaines, to the Secretary of War, dated Fort Hawkins, Georgia, December 15, 1817.

They look well, and are ready to march; but through inattention on the part of the contractor's agent to the requisitions for a supply of rations, will, I apprehend, according to custom, delay the movement of the militia until some part of the frontier settlements suffer by the Indians.

Extract of a letter from M. Arbuckle, lieutenant colonel commanding at Fort Scott, Georgia, to George Graham, acting Secretary of War, dated December 19, 1817.

We have, at present, about twenty days rations of meat on hand for the number of troops present. Of flour, we have a greater supply.

Extract of a letter from M. Arbuckle, lieutenant colonel commanding at Fort Scott, Georgia, to general Gaines, dated Dec. 20, 1817.

There is but about twenty days rations of meat on hand, at this post. I have sent the contractor's agent to Fort Gaines, to procure beef, and if he should be disappointed there, have directed him to proceed further.

Copy of a letter from David Brearly, colonel commanding the 7th Military Department, to the Secretary of War, dated

FORT HAWKINS, (Geo.) Dec. 24, 1817.

SIR,

I have the honor to state, that I have, this day, drawn a bill of exchange on you for ten thousand two hundred and seventy-five dol-

lars and forty-two cents, in favor of John S. Thomas—an account of supplies of provisions purchased by special contract, for the use of the troops in 7th Military Department, in consequence of the failure of the present contractor to comply with a requisition made on him for thirty thousand rations, by major general Gaines, in May last.

I have the honor to be, &c.

Extract of a letter from gen. Gaines to the Secretary of War, dated

HARTFORD, (Geo.) Jan. 9, 1818.

I do not apprehend that we shall lose a vessel, or that any serious consequences to the troops at fort Scott, will result from the delay and difficulty of obtaining supplies by that channel: the supply of flour is more than sufficient for the present month; and there is likewise a considerable supply of corn at the fort, and beef cattle in the neighborhood. Of salted pork there can be but little, until the arrival in the river of thirty thousand rations, and with every other requisite supply, ordered in the early part of last month from Mobile, and which may be brought up the river in the covered ball-proof boats, which have been prepared for the purpose. But to guard against every untoward obstacle in that quarter, I have ordered supplies from this place and fort Hawkins, part of which are now on the way, and will be deposited at a work now constructing by the detachment under general Glasscock on Flint river, at the Chehaw village, sixty miles above fort Scott, whence the supplies will be taken in ball-proof boats; and I have strong ground to believe, they will be at fort Scott by the 24th of the present month, at which time, I calculate upon being able to concentrate my force, and shall lose no time in attempting a decisive blow, which, I trust, will terminate the war.

The detachment under general Glasscock, delayed by rainy weather, bad roads, and want of punctuality in the contractor's department, may not be able to form a junction with the United States' troops in time to put an end to the war, before their term of service expires, which will be early in next month.

Extract of a letter from brigadier general Thomas Glasscock, of the Georgia Militia, to general Gaines, dated

CAMP CUMMING, Jan. 10, 1818.

We have not now on hand ten bushels of corn, and Brockman is of opinion, that it will be dangerous to again go to the Chehaw, in consequence of which I have (with his particular request) sent him

with the express. I must refer you to him for further information, as to the corn and provisions to be procured in the nation.

Not having calculated on moving from this place for six or seven days, for want of provisions, &c. I gave a furlough to capt. Melvin. Should you deem it necessary for us to move before that time, I would be glad that he would return.